

Topic:	Pedestrian Oriented Design (POD); Overlay District; Transit Oriented Development (TOD)
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State:	Minnesota
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Municipality:	City of Minneapolis
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Community Type - applicable to:	Urban; Suburban
Title:	City of Minneapolis Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District Ordinance
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Abstract

The City Code of Minneapolis, Minnesota provides for pedestrian oriented overlay districts ("PO") for smaller sized areas throughout the city in the vicinity of public transit service stations (bus, train, or both) that consist of regulations aimed to promote pedestrian activity and street life in addition to the underlying zone's original regulations. The city recently constructed Metro Transit Hiawatha Light Rail Line that makes 17 stops between the popular Mall of America and downtown Minneapolis, with dozen of bus routes timed to connect with the train at each stop. Some of the PO districts consist of the area surrounding these stops, and other transit centers.

The ordinance prohibits drive-through facilities and automobile service uses. The maximum off-street parking allowed for nonresidential uses is 75% of that which is allowed elsewhere in the city, and shared-parking is encouraged. Design standards to enhance the pedestrian-friendly atmosphere include a requirement that nonresidential building facades have at least 40% of their frontage covered with glass that allow views into and out of the building at eye level, and awnings and canopies are encouraged to protect pedestrians from the elements. The ordinance has specific PO regulations for several particular areas of the city (with sections within the ordinance identifying each area and describing the area's location and boundaries), such as requiring a travel demand management plan (TDMP) for new developments over 4,000 square feet in the "Lake and Hennepin Area." In specified transit station areas, the ordinance prohibits the development of any new commercial parking lots or the expansion of existing commercial parking lots. The minimum FAR requirements for both commercial and industrial uses in the transit station areas are set at 1.0. Building placement shall be in a manner that facilitates pedestrian access and circulation, with at least one principal entrance facing the public street. To enhance the pedestrian experience, the ordinance requires building to provide amenities such as tables, seating and landscaping in the area between the building and the lot line.

Resource

CODE OF ORDINANCES – CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA
TITLE 20: ZONING CODE, Chapter 551 Overlay Districts
ARTICLE II. PO PEDESTRIAN ORIENTED OVERLAY DISTRICT
§ 551.60 to § 551.175

§ 551.60. Purpose.

The PO Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District is established to preserve and encourage the pedestrian character of commercial areas and to promote street life and activity by regulating building orientation and design and accessory parking facilities, and by prohibiting certain high impact and automobile-oriented uses.

§ 551.70. Established boundaries.

The boundaries of the PO Overlay District shall be the areas shown on the official zoning map.

§ 551.80. Eligible areas outside of established boundaries.

Any person having a legal or equitable interest in property located outside of the established boundaries may file a petition to request the addition of the PO Overlay District classification in the manner provided for zoning amendments in Chapter 525, Administration and Enforcement. The following criteria shall be considered when designating a PO Overlay District:

- (1) The level of pedestrian interest and activity.
- (2) The variety of retail sales and services activities.
- (3) The extent to which properties have limited or no front setbacks.
- (4) The availability of public transit service in the area.

§ 551.90. Prohibited uses.

The following uses shall be prohibited in the PO Overlay District:

- (1) Drive-through facilities.
- (2) Automobile services uses.
- (3) Transportation uses.

§ 551.100. Fast food restaurants.

Fast food restaurants shall be located only in storefront buildings existing on the effective date of this ordinance, provided further that no significant changes shall be made to the exterior of the structure and freestanding signs shall be prohibited.

§ 551.110. Building placement.

The placement of buildings shall reinforce the street wall, maximize natural surveillance and visibility, and facilitate pedestrian access and circulation. The first floor of buildings shall be located not more than eight (8) feet from the front lot line, except where a greater yard is required by this zoning ordinance. In the case of a corner lot, the building wall abutting each street shall be located not more than eight (8) feet from the lot line, except where a greater yard is required by this zoning ordinance. The area between the building and the lot line shall include amenities such as landscaping, tables and seating. Buildings shall be oriented so that at least one (1) principal entrance faces the public street rather than the interior of the site.

§ 551.120. Building facade.

(a) Window area.

At least forty (40) percent of the first floor facade of any nonresidential use that faces a public street or sidewalk shall be windows or doors of clear or lightly tinted glass that allow views into and out of the building at eye level. Windows shall be distributed in a more or less even manner. Minimum window area shall be measured between the height of two (2) feet and ten (10) feet above the finished level of the first floor.

(b) Awnings and canopies.

Awnings and canopies are encouraged in order to provide protection for pedestrians and shall be placed to emphasize individual uses and entrances. Backlit awnings and canopies shall be prohibited.

§ 551.130. Prohibited on-premise signs.

The following on-premise signs shall be prohibited in the PO Overlay District:

- (1) Pole signs.
- (2) Backlit awning and canopy signs.
- (3) Backlit insertable panel projecting signs.

§ 551.140. Accessory parking.

(a) Location.

On-site accessory parking facilities shall be located to the rear or interior side of the site, within the principal building served, or entirely below grade.

(b) Dimensions.

Parking lots shall be limited to not more than sixty (60) feet of street frontage.

(c) Driveways.

The driveway width for all parking facilities shall not exceed twenty (20) feet of street frontage.

(d) Shared parking.

The development of shared parking is encouraged, subject to the provisions of Chapter 541, Off-Street Parking and Loading.

(e) Off-site parking.

When off-site parking is allowed as specified in Chapter 541, Off-Street Parking and Loading, parking may be located an additional five hundred (500) feet from the use served, subject to the requirements of Chapter 541, Off-Street Parking and Loading, governing the location of off-site parking.

(f) Minimum and maximum number of accessory parking spaces.

The minimum off-street parking requirement for nonresidential uses shall be seventy-five (75) percent of the minimum requirement specified in Chapter 541, Off-Street Parking and Loading. The maximum off-street parking allowance for nonresidential uses shall be seventy five (75) percent of the maximum allowed as specified in Chapter 541, Off-Street Parking and Loading, provided that a development with one (1) or more nonresidential uses shall not be restricted to fewer than ten (10) total accessory parking spaces on a zoning lot.

§ 551.145. West Broadway area.

The following additional regulations shall govern development within the PO Overlay District along West Broadway Avenue between the Mississippi River and the western city limits, as shown on the official zoning map:

(1) Minimum floor area.

New development in Commercial, OR2 and OR3, and Industrial districts shall be subject to a minimum floor area ratio of one (1.0). Individual phases of a phased development may be less than this minimum, provided the entire development meets the minimum

requirement. This requirement shall not apply to the expansion of buildings existing on the effective date of this section.

(2) Minimum number of floors.

Buildings that front on West Broadway shall be two (2) or more floors for the length of the West Broadway frontage.

§ 551.150. Lake and Hennepin area.

The following additional regulations shall govern development within the PO Overlay District in and around the intersection of West Lake Street and Hennepin Avenue South, with an eastern boundary of Bryant Avenue South, as shown on the official zoning map:

(1) Travel demand management plan.

All development containing more than four thousand (4,000) square feet of new or additional gross floor area, or more than four (4) new or additional parking spaces, shall include a travel demand management plan (TDM) that addresses the transportation impacts of the development on air quality, parking and roadway infrastructure. The planning director, in consultation with the city engineer, shall conduct the administrative review of the TDM. The planning director shall recommend to the zoning administrator any mitigating measures deemed reasonably necessary, who shall include such recommendation as a condition of the issuance of any building permit, zoning certificate or other approval required by this zoning ordinance or other applicable law. All findings and decisions of the planning director shall be final, subject to appeal to the city planning commission, as specified in Chapter 525, Administration and Enforcement.

§ 551.155. Nicollet Franklin area.

The following additional regulations shall govern development within the PO Overlay District along Nicollet Avenue from Franklin Avenue on the north to the Midtown Greenway/Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority right-of-way on the south, and generally from the alley to the east to the alley on west unless other wise shown; Franklin Avenue between LaSalle Avenue and I35W; and 26th Street between Nicollet Avenue and the alley between Stevens Avenue and 2nd Avenue S., as shown on the official zoning map:

(1) Travel demand management plan.

All development containing more than ten thousand (10,000) square feet of new or additional commercial gross floor area or more than seventy-five (75) residential units, shall include a travel demand management plan (TDM) that addresses the transportation impacts of the development on air quality, parking and roadway infrastructure. The planning director, in consultation with the city engineer, shall conduct the administrative review of the TDM. The planning director shall recommend to the zoning administrator any mitigating measures deemed reasonably necessary, who shall include such

recommendation as a condition of the issuance of any building permit, zoning certificate or other approval required by this zoning ordinance or other applicable law. All findings and decisions of the planning director shall be final, subject to appeal to the city planning commission, as specified in Chapter 525, Administration and Enforcement.

(2) Building alteration or replacement.

The alteration of an existing building shall not result in a reduction of the existing number of stories (e.g., a two-story building shall not be reduced to a one-story building or be replaced by less than a two-story building).

(3) Minimum floor area.

New development in Commercial, OR2 and OR3, and Industrial districts shall be subject to a minimum floor area ratio requirement of one (1.0). Individual phases of a phased development may be less than this minimum, provided the entire development meets the minimum requirement. This requirement shall not apply to the expansion of buildings existing on the effective date of this section.

(4) Corner cuts.

New development on the corner of two (2) street rights-of way shall have a setback at the sidewalk level on the corner of the building. This setback shall be no less than two (2) feet and no greater than eight (8) feet from the corner of the property.

(5) Linear frontage of one (1) use.

No single commercial use in one (1) building shall extend along more than one hundred and twenty (120) linear feet of the first floor facade fronting any street.

§ 551.160. Dinkytown area.

The following additional regulations shall govern development within the PO Overlay District in and around the intersection of Fourth Street Southeast and Fourteenth Avenue Southeast, as shown on the official zoning map:

(1) Off-street parking.

Nonresidential uses shall not be required to provide accessory off-street parking facilities.

§ 551.165. Stadium Village area.

The following additional regulations shall govern development within the PO Overlay District in and around the intersection of Washington Avenue Southeast and Oak Street Southeast, west of Huron Boulevard, as shown on the official zoning map:

(1) Off-street parking.

Nonresidential uses shall not be required to provide accessory off-street parking facilities.

§ 551.170. Central and Lowry area.

The following additional regulations shall govern development within the PO Overlay District in and around the intersection of Central Avenue Northeast and Lowry Avenue Northeast, as shown on the official zoning map:

(1) Drive-through banking facilities.

Notwithstanding any other provision to the contrary, an existing drive-through banking facility may be rebuilt or may add one (1) additional drive-through lane provided the drive-through banking facility or additional drive-through lane is located within the boundaries of the zoning lot existing on the effective date of this ordinance, and subject to all other applicable regulations of this zoning ordinance.

(2) Building alteration or replacement.

The alteration of an existing building shall not result in a reduction of the existing number of stories (e.g., a two-story building shall not be reduced to a one-story building or be replaced by less than a two-story building).

§551.175. Transit Station areas.

The following additional regulations shall govern development within PO Overlay Districts in and around the following existing or proposed transit stations, as shown on the official zoning maps:

Cedar-Riverside LRT Station

Franklin Avenue LRT Station

Lake Street/Midtown LRT Station

38th Street LRT Station

46th Street LRT Station

University Avenue Southeast and 29th Avenue Southeast

(1) Prohibited uses.

The following uses shall be prohibited in the PO Overlay District:

(a) Self service storage.

(b) Commercial parking lots, including the expansion of any existing commercial parking lot.

(c) The conversion of any accessory parking lot to a commercial parking lot.

(2) Wholesaling, warehousing and distribution; furniture moving and storage.

Uses shall be limited to thirty thousand (30,000) square feet of gross floor area.

(3) Density bonuses.

Where the primary zoning district provides a density bonus, such bonus shall be thirty (30) percent.

(4) Minimum floor area.

New development shall be subject to a minimum floor area ratio requirement, as specified in Table 551-0, Transit Station Area Minimum Floor Area Ratio Requirements. Individual phases of a phased development may be less than this minimum, provided the entire development meets the minimum requirement. This requirement shall not apply to the expansion of buildings existing on the effective date of this section.

Table 551-0 Transit Station Area Minimum Floor Area Ratio Requirements

Transit Station Area	Minimum FAR		
	Commercial, OR2 and OR3 Districts	Industrial Districts	Residence and OR1 Districts
Cedar-Riverside	1.0	1.0	none
Franklin Avenue	1.0	1.0	none
Lake Street/Midtown	1.0	1.0	none
38th Street	1.0	1.0	none
46th Street	1.0	1.0	none
University Avenue Southeast and 29th Avenue Southeast	1.0	1.0	none

(5) Off-street parking.

(a) *Multiple-family dwellings.* The minimum off-street parking requirement shall be ninety (90) percent of the number specified in Chapter 541, Off-Street Parking and Loading.